



The Utah Interpreter

News for Utah's Interpreting Community



News from The Utah Interpreter Program

Mitch Jensen, Program Director

www.aslterps.utah.gov

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Introducing UIP's Online Newsletter

The Utah Interpreter is a new quarterly e-publication designed to keep interpreters across the State of Utah informed of current events happening within the Utah Interpreter Program, the Division of Services to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, the State Interpreter Certification Board, and national organizations. Additionally, It is a way for UIP to disseminate important information which may affect practicing interpreters. UIP staff members often get questions or hear comments that seem to stem from misunderstandings within the interpreting community, so we feel it is important to have an avenue in which we can begin to work with interpreters and answer wide-ranging questions about the interpreting field, certification, maintenance, or any other service we provide. Hopefully this will be beneficial to you. Please contact any of us with questions or with issues you would like to see addressed in future newsletters! Enjoy this first e-issue of the Utah Interpreter!

Director's Update

Now that 2006 is here, I want to update you on the many new ideas and programs planned for this year. Last year there was a great deal of discussion as to the critical shortage of sign language interpreters and how we could retain certified interpreters, recruit new interpreters, and improve interpreter skills. This can seem an overwhelming task when we consider the various needs, lack of funding for interpreter training, and other concerns.

DSDHH heartily supports the improvement of skills so that interpreting services meet established standards. And while we

continue to support these standards, you also need to know that UIP supports YOU! We are your biggest fan and cheer you on in your pursuit to acquire advanced skills. We want you to know this. UIP will do everything possible to assist you. When I see interpreters leave the field — no matter the reason — it is like a family member moving away, and it is painful.

One of my favorite movies of 2005 was "Cinderella Man." If you have seen this movie you know it is about more than boxing. This is based on the true story of James Braddock and his struggle during the Depression to support and take care of his family. The

only way he was able to succeed was through the support of his wife. In the movie, his wife states, "You cannot win without me behind you." She was his biggest fan! Having UIP on your team and you on our team equals a winning combination. No one takes pleasure when candidates do not pass their test.

During 2006 there are several ways we plan to support and assist all those we can. The UIP interpreter lab is open on a regular basis for your use. There is no charge to use the lab. Some improvements are planned, as we now have funding. The lab is staffed by Interpreter and Language

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Mentors to assist you. You can come in and work on you own, or work with a mentor. You can also have your skills evaluated to help you meet your goals.

A new program will be starting in the near future. UIP is pleased to announce the formation of the Interpreter Certification Advancement Network (ICAN). We are currently in the process of hiring a coordinator for this program which will provide direct mentoring for a limited number of individuals to aid in skill development leading to certification advancement. It will include language mentoring, workshops and classes, as well as working with certified interpreters. The goal upon completing the program is enhanced proficiency and advancing participants certification level. (See the article in this newsletter for more information.)

There has been an increase in the number of quality workshops sponsored by UIP and others. Be sure to check our web site regularly, as workshops are added often (www.aslterps.utah.gov). UIP makes every attempt to suit workshops to interpreter needs. If you have a suggestion, please let us know.

Certification testing continues to make improvements to assure that those who have the skills are passing the test. Did you know the Division currently subsidizes over 50% of the testing cost? I am aware of concerns about the turnaround time of test results. We have put into place new measures to get the results back in a more timely manner without compromising the integrity of the test.

One other change that has been made in the testing policy is that candidates are no longer able to test when results are still pending from a previous test. Once results are

received, registration will be taken for the next available testing.

Hopefully, you will find this information encouraging, and understand how a team effort can bring about successful results. UIP wishes you a great and productive year! Please know my office is always open to you.

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Professional Development

This section of the newsletter is intended to offer interpreters in the community an array of useful information from professional development opportunities, to ideas for skill development activi-



ties, to better understanding continuing education options. As professionals, we are obligated to meet certification maintenance requirements with the expectation it will continue to ensure our proficiency as practitioners. With such busy lives and limited income, this requirement can be met with some resistance. The importance of such a requirement can also be lost by mistakenly "going through the motions" when attending trainings and not actively engaging in the process to apply it to our work.

One way to enhance this experience is to have a greater understanding of your interpreting work — strengths as well as areas of improvement. *Be honest.* Don't be afraid to own the things you do

well! Once strengths are recognized, they lay the foundation to be further built upon. *Be realistic.* When identifying areas of improvement, it isn't helpful to generalize with inflated statements such as, "the whole thing was terrible!" Instead, be specific and identify exactly what wasn't effective and why. This will assist in having a more clear understanding of what you would like to improve and apply principles taught. The ability to self-monitor allows an interpreter to continuously correct and progress independently.

Self-examination is an important concept to consistently incorporate into life, whether personally or professionally, it can provide valuable insight into who you are, what you value, and where you are going. Billie Jean King, one of the greatest American female tennis players, said "I think self-awareness is probably the most important thing in becoming a champion." While it can create success in many areas of life, it is definitely imperative in enhancing skill development as a sign language interpreter.

One can grow tremendously when regularly assessing one's work, whether formally through videotape and analysis or informally while on-the-job. We need to understand that as professionals we are responsible for our growth and earn our knowledge through our own discovery process. Workshops, mentors, books, articles and other resources are tools that can be utilized to support this progression. Using these tools effectively will provide maximum benefit to our work.

UIP Interpreter Trainer/Mentor

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UIP Spotlight

UIP plans to recognize one interpreter each newsletter who is newly certified, has advanced their certification or has achieved something that makes us step back and just say, "WOW!"



Please join me in congratulating **ALICIA COWIN** on achieving her Intermediate Level certification! Alicia is a SLCC ITP graduate, and has been working as an interpreter for the past five years. She grew up in Orem, Utah, where she lived with her six brothers and two sisters. Since joining the profession, Alicia has worked for Clark County School District, Utah Valley State College, Salt Lake Community College, Covenant Job services, Signing Resources, and the University of Utah. In addition to working as a sign language interpreter, she loves to work out, and is a certified Pilates instructor.

Alicia is married to Troy Cowin, who competes in triathlons and also likes to work out. He is a student at the University of Utah, and is currently preparing for law school. They live in the Sugar House area, and love to take their dog on long walks.

Having worked with Alicia in the past, I can truly say she is friendly, always willing to help, and a great interpreter! So if any of you see her out and about, please pat her on the back and tell her, "we salute you!"

Submitted by Clay Anderson

The ICAN Program

UIP is happy to announce a new program beginning this March! As many know, UIP has always had a strong mentoring philosophy, which follows a national trend and is what we focus on in our existing interpreter lab. In 2001, UIP attempted to establish a structured mentoring program, but early on we were faced with budget cuts and were unable to complete the program. The turnout for the program was so great that we realized how important it was for us to offer this program again someday, when funding permitted.

During last year's legislative session, a bill was passed which required the Public Service Commission (who regulates relay services and telecommunication needs for the deaf and hard-of-hearing in Utah) to invest in the interpreting community. The ultimate goal is to have enough interpreters (who meet the minimum standard, set by State policy) to fulfill the demand state-wide.

The Public Service Commission funded several projects, one of which is UIP's Interpreter Certification Advancement Network (ICAN) program. Rather than focusing on interpreters who are undergoing their initial training, *the ICAN program focuses on those interpreters who are currently working at a Novice or EIPA level*, who often have few opportunities for guidance at this critical period of "entry-to-practice." Often, interpreters who graduate from interpreter training programs and become certified at the Novice level or at the EIPA level would like some direction along their path to becoming Intermediate certified or nationally certified. This is the focus of the ICAN program.

ICAN consists of a team of interpreter mentors, language mentors, and those interpreters who participate in the program. It is a 10-month program in total, during which intensive language development is a primary focus. Language mentors will work one-on-one with the participants, focusing on ASL development. Later on in the program, interpreter mentors will work alongside language mentors to guide program participants through the interpreting process. Program participants will have the opportunity to work alongside interpreter mentors in a variety of settings, exposing the participants to a wide variety of interpreting situations.

The program is designed to complement work that interpreters are already doing. It is expected that the program participants will be able to commit to:

- a minimum of 3 hours a week for meeting with their language mentors
- a minimum of 3 hours a week for meeting with their interpreter mentors
- one day a month for professional development sessions
- attend a minimum of 3 out of 4 one-day or two-day specialized workshops
- attend the immersion trainings for a total of ten days during the summer months (details to be outlined during orientation)
- attend a minimum of 3 community events with their language mentor
- complete all structured activities and tasks. ICAN will offer a one-time Utah Intermediate Test to the program participants, at no cost.

The ICAN program is an intensive program, with many benefits to those who participate (see benefits, more about the program,

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and the application by clicking on the ICAN Program links found at www.aslterps.utah.gov). UIP would like to see more and more Novice interpreters improve the quality of their work and ultimately become Intermediate or nationally certified interpreters, and this is going to require a high level of commitment for all involved. The good thing, however, is that it will also be a fun and enriching experience, and one that will be essential for those wishing to advance their certification status.

*The deadline for those wishing to apply to the program is **February 17, 2006**.* The application requires a videotaped sample of each applicant. For those wishing to use the filming space through UIP, please contact Anita Nelson at 263-4897 or anitanelson@utah.gov, or visit the interpreter lab at the Sanderson Community Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing during normal lab hours (Tuesday through Thursday, 2pm-9pm). We anticipate the program will begin in March 2006; applicants will know whether or not they are accepted (via letter only) by the end of February or beginning of March. We look forward to implementing the new ICAN program and hope that YOU will become involved!

Interpreter Certification Advancement Network

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It is good to have an end to journey toward, but it is the journey that matters in the end.

~Sandra Gish

UIP Interpreter Lab

There is an interpreting practice videotape in the UIP Lab called, "Living Fully." The presenter tells a story of three bricklayers working together on a building. A boy approaches each one separately and asks, "What are you doing?" The first man replies, "Laying bricks." The second man replies, "Building a wall." The third man replies, "Building a beautiful cathedral."

The UIP lab provides an opportunity for interpreters to ask themselves the same question: What am I doing? In my professional skill building, am I merely laying bricks? Just building a wall? Or am I working to build a beautiful cathedral?

The UIP Interpreter Lab at the Sanderson Center of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing is a great resource for skill building:



- Books and videos can be used to increase knowledge of Deaf Culture and interpreting issues. They can also be used for interpreting practice.
- When is the last time you filmed a sample of your interpreting work and analyzed it? The lab can help you film in the testing room and talk about tools for analyzing interpreting and language skills.
- Interpreter mentors and language mentors are available to meet with you. They can look at your work with you and talk about what they see. They can give you direction for improving your work.

- Do you want to get CEH credit for attending the lab? Fill out a Professional Development Plan with a lab mentor. After it has been approved, you can earn up to 10 CEHs per maintenance cycle for your work in the lab.

- There are workshops on CD available to checkout. These are interactive workshops which can be done at your own pace. They can be checked out for three (3) weeks and require a deposit. RID CEUs and Utah CEHs can be earned through these workshops. These can be mailed to anywhere in the State.

The UIP Interpreter Lab provides these resources and so much more! Most resources are there free of charge. Stop in and see what is available to help you build your great cathedral. Check the UIP web site at www.aslterps.utah.gov/development.php for the current lab hours, the form for creating a Professional Development Plan, the available workshops on CD, and more about the lab. Questions?

UIP Interpreter Lab

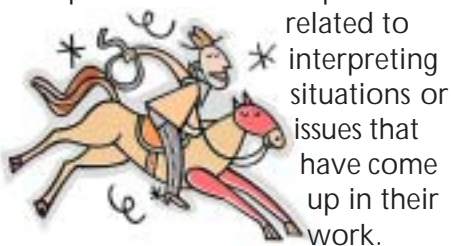
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Cowboy Philosophy

What is Cowboy Philosophy? Growing up in New Mexico, I used to hear helpful anecdotes passed down from cowboys who used to roam the wild, wild West. Before we had automobiles, trains, and iPods, there were great cowboys who lived by a set of rules. These rules were never written down or taught; they were innate, in some ways. Now that we very seldom meet these wonderful

heroes, we quote their knowledge and wisdom to help us remember the hard lessons they learned. Luckily, we as interpreters, also have a Code of Ethics to help guide us!

This column is designed to be a question and answer forum, where interpreters can send in questions



These questions will be answered in the newsletter so all of us can benefit from the wisdom of a working, professional cowboy interpreter!

Since this is the first Cowboy Philosophy column, I will start with some words of wisdom by Baxter Black, famous cowboy, poet, and humorist.

Q. How do you want to be remembered?

A. As someone who didn't embarrass his friends!

I don't know how to say it better! I hope that each of us can act in a professional way when we are in interpreting situations so that both deaf consumers and hearing consumers will say that we were not embarrassing. Sometimes, to our dismay, this may happen, as I once experienced. In one interpreting assignment, the deaf client told a joke that was so funny, I kept laughing about it, hours later! You know what I mean – the jokes that you just can't forget. In fact, the deaf client reminded me again of the punch line at one point, and I lost it – while interpreting! I started laughing so much that I had to pretend to cough and leave. This made me look pretty

foolish, and it embarrassed the client. I will never forget this experience. Don't make the same mistake – keep the jokes for after the assignment!

Have an interpreting question you would like answered? Just email the cowboy philosopher.

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The UIP Program Assistant Team

One of the most-asked questions UIP addresses is how many workshop hours interpreters accumulate towards their maintenance requirements each year.

The Utah Interpreter Program is excited to announce our new internet accessible database, available this month. All interpreters who have attended workshops (and signed attendance records which have been submitted to UIP) can view their own workshop attendance history, including CEHs earned for the year or maintenance cycle (three years), on our web site.



Contact Jennifer or Geneva by phone or email to initially set up your authorization code. Interpreters can then access this information by logging in on the Interpreter Directory page of the UIP web site ("Interpreter Login"), selecting their name, then entering their authorization code (this link takes you directly to the login page:

http://www.aslterps.utah.gov/UIP/terp_dir.php). Access to personal file data, including address, contact numbers, e-mail, certification and renewal information will now be available. Please check your personal data for accuracy, and advise us of any changes by sending UIP an email through this same screen, via the embedded email window.

UIP's new renewal policy took effect as of January 1, 2006, and now allows interpreters until the last day of the renewal cycle month to submit maintenance forms and fees without penalty.

The new policy also allows for a grace period (through the following month) to turn in maintenance forms and fees, which must also be accompanied by the standard late fee (\$80).

UIP's goal is to help interpreters access their personal information and simplify the certification renewal process. We always welcome your suggestions (send them to UIPComments@utah.gov). If you experience any problems accessing our web site, please contact our office.

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Consider the postage stamp, my son. It secures success through its ability to stick to one thing till it gets there.

~Josh Billings